

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. Houston


DATE: 14 February 1952

FROM : 

STATINTL


SUBJECT: Requests for Release from Jury Duty

1. It is a stated Agency policy that jury service is encouraged wherever possible except in those instances where interference or impairment of Agency function is apparent. Normally, requests for excuse are based on unusual pressure, security, or other adequate reason. You will recall that I recently conducted an informal survey with the objective of establishing a ratio between persons serving on jury duty and persons excused from jury duty. It was thought that a favorable ratio could be presented to the Chief Judge of the District Court and a type of standard operating procedure or policy be reached. The survey demonstrated quite clearly that our requests for excuse from jury duty exceeded the number serving on jury duty. The conclusion obviously is that our policy is not being followed and is deserving of more restrictive treatment.

2. I believe we have been averaging two to three requests per month and the cumulative effect over a period of time will work to our disadvantage in those cases where there is a compelling need for excuse.  who recently received an excuse, informed me that the Chief Judge was rather reluctant in granting an excuse and admonished him for having sought postponement, although somewhat improper since the request originated from CIA.

3. This matter is brought to your attention in the hope that the application of stated Agency policy will be more restrictive in the future. In the meantime, I propose to draft a letter to the Chief Judge explaining in general terms Agency problems, and to handcarry the letter so that a more amiable and understanding relationship can be developed.

4. Incidentally, on the last occasion we presented two cases for excuse from jury duty. Inasmuch as these letters are fashioned along the lines of indispensability, for the time being it becomes somewhat difficult for the Judges to understand the existence of two indispensable persons at one and the same time.


Assistant General Counsel

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